

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system and method are disclosed for switching contexts within a spoken dialog between a user and a spoken dialog system. The spoken dialog system utilizes modular subdialogs selected or developed for being invoked by at least one flow controller that is associated with a dialog manager that manages the spoken dialog. The spoken dialog system includes a dialog manager with a flow controller and a reusable subdialog module. The method comprises, while the spoken dialog is being controlled by the subdialog module that was invoked by the flow controller, receiving context-changing input associated with speech from a user that changes a dialog context and comparing the context-changing input to at least one context shift. And, if any of the context shifts are activated by the comparing step, then the method comprises passing control of the spoken dialog to the flow controller with context shift message and destination state. The spoken dialog system manages the dialog via a stack of flow controllers and/or dialog modules.